

September 13, 2023



FROM THE DESK OF
COMMISSIONER
BRENT BAILEY
CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE



The Central District is pleased to bring you the latest information concerning utility rates, project developments, Public Service Commission actions and other news you can use. I hope you will find this information to be a useful resource to learn about the Public Service Commission, consumer issues and the continuous work we are doing for the citizens in the Central District and across the state of Mississippi. Thank you again for allowing me to serve you in this capacity.

Brent Bailey

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Madison County Community Forum



On Tuesday, September 12, 2023, the Central District office of the Mississippi Public Service Commission held a Community Forum in Madison County. This is the first in a series of at least 6 public forums to be held around the Central District. The purpose of the forums is to educate customers on the role and responsibilities of the Commission as well as share and discuss with customers the findings of the [report](#) submitted to the Commission by Entergy MS in response to the widespread power outages experienced during the June 2023 storm events.

Utility customers in attendance made statements regarding their personal experience with a certain utility service, asked questions for the Commission or about the plans utilities had for increasing reliability, and offered general views on various utility-related matters. I appreciate all those who attended and shared their evening with us. In addition to the members of the public who attended, representatives of electric, natural gas and water/sewer utilities were present and responded to questions or concerns put forth by customers in attendance.

Our next [Community Forum](#) will be held in Vicksburg, MS on September 19 at 6 pm at the Robert M. Walker Building Board Room, 1415 Walnut Street, Vicksburg, MS. Please make plans to join us to learn, share and discuss utility issues important to you. **Dates and locations of additional future forums are listed on the last page.**

National Digital Connectivity and Lifeline Awareness Week

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates, the Federal Communications Commission and state public utility commissions across the nation are observing National Digital Connectivity and Lifeline Awareness Week from September 11 to September 15.

Lifeline is a program for low-income consumers, offering a way to affordably connect with the nation's voice and broadband networks, secure employment opportunities, access essential healthcare services, stay connected with family and seek assistance during emergencies. The ability to stay connected holds the power to bridge the gap between social inclusion and isolation. Thus, Digital Connectivity and Lifeline Awareness Week seeks to raise awareness about digital inclusion and ensure equitable access to vital communication services and increase participation in Lifeline and the Affordable Connectivity Program.





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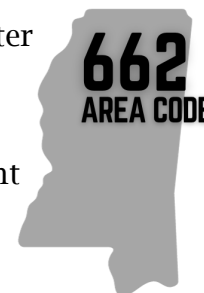
The federal Lifeline Program provides substantial assistance to eligible low-income consumers who are either participants in specified public assistance programs or meet specific income criteria. These consumers can benefit from discounts of up to \$9.25 per month for broadband-qualifying services, up to \$5.25 per month for voice-qualifying services and up to \$34.25 per month for residents residing on Tribal lands. An additional \$25 discount is also available for low-income subscribers residing on Tribal lands.

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) offers benefits to qualifying households, including a monthly discount of up to \$30 for broadband services per eligible household, with an increased benefit of up to \$75 for households on Tribal lands. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price. The funds are transferred directly from ACP to the participating broadband service providers.

In today's world, internet access is no longer a luxury, but a necessity for everyone, everywhere. No household should be left without access to crucial telecommunications and broadband internet services because of affordability issues. More extensive information on Lifeline Program eligibility, rules, and key messages is available at <http://www.lifelinesupport.org>. Learn more about Affordable Connectivity Program benefits and eligibility at <https://www.fcc.gov/acp>.

Mississippi Preparing for New Area Code

The 662 Area Code prefix is forecasted to be exhausted sometime during the 3rd quarter of 2026. The North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA) Relief guidelines directs NANPA to initiate the process for adding a new area code for the affected area typically within 36 months prior to the predicted exhaust date. NANPA anticipates introducing a new area code prefix to overlay and in addition to the current 662 area code in north Mississippi.



In Mississippi's case, NANPA has initiated the process and has organized a pre-petition Industry Meeting for Oct. 3, 2023. After the meeting with telecommunication industry stakeholders, NANPA, as a neutral third party, will file the petition for the 662 overlay with the Mississippi Public Service Commission. (How long it will take NANPA to file the petition after the Industry Meeting is unclear at this time.) Once the MPSC grants the petition, NANPA and the telecom industry will be tasked with taking all the steps necessary to have the new area code in place at least 6 months prior to the July 2026 projected exhaust date. We have not been informed what the new area code number will potentially be for north Mississippi.

Highlights from the September 7, 2023, Docket Meeting

The Mississippi Public Service Commission met on September 7, 2023, at 10:00 am CT to consider the following [agenda](#) items:

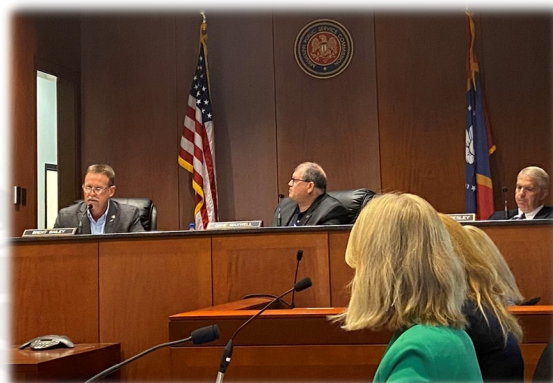
- ☑ **The Commission** issued an [Order](#) Approving **Boomerang Wireless d/b/a enTouch Wireless** Application Seeking Partial Relinquishment of Lifeline ETC Designation.
- ☑ **The Commission** issued Orders approving the Annual ETC Certification for the 2024 High-Cost Universal Service Fund (USF) Program Year for the following:
 - [BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. d/b/a AT&T Mississippi](#)
 - [Cellular South Licenses, LLC](#)

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- Rural Carriers all in one docket [Order](#):
Bay Springs Telephone Company; Bruce Telephone Company; Calhoun City Telephone Company; CenturyTel of North Mississippi, Inc.; Decatur Telephone Company; Franklin Telephone Company; Frontier Communications of Mississippi, Inc.; Fulton Telephone Company; Georgetown Telephone Company; Mound Bayou Telephone Company; Myrtle Telephone Company; Noxapater Telephone Company; Sledge Telephone Company/ Lakeside Telephone Company; Smithville Telephone Company; Southeast Telephone Company; Windstream Mississippi, Inc.
 - [TEC of Jackson, Inc.](#)
 - [Telepak Networks, Inc.](#)
 - [New Cingular Wireless/AT&T Mobility](#)
 - [Viasat Carrier Services, Inc.](#)
 - [Aristotle Unified Communications](#)
 - [East Mississippi Connect LLC](#)
 - [Delta Fiber LLC](#)
 - [Conexon Connect LLC](#)
 - [Windstream Communications, LLC](#)
 - [4-County Fiber, LLC d/b/a 4CFastnet](#)
- ☑ The following matters were referred to a Public Service Commissioner or Hearing Examiner for hearing, report and recommendation of an appropriate Order, or any other action necessary:
- Central District Public Service Commissioner Brent Bailey:
 - Petition of [Greer Solar, LLC](#) for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) Authorizing the Construction and Operation of a Solar Electric Generating and Storage Facility in **Washington County**.
 - Petition of [Ocelot Solar, LLC](#), for a CPCN Authorizing the Construction, Ownership, and Operation of a Solar Electric Generating Facility in **Sharkey County**.
 - Petition of [Hinds Solar, LLC](#), for a CPCN Authorizing the Construction and Operation of a Solar Electric Generating and Storage Facility in **Hinds County**.
 - Petition of [McNew Renewables LLC](#) for a CPCN Authorizing Construction, Ownership, and Operation of a Solar Electric Generating Facility in **Washington County**.
 - [Notice](#) of Intent of **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC** to Establish Initial and Temporary Rates for Wastewater Disposal Service for Huntington Park Subdivision in **Lauderdale County**.
 - [Petition](#) of **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC** for a CPCN Approving the Provision of Wastewater Disposal Service in a Specified Area in **Lauderdale County**.
 - Southern District Public Service Commissioner:
 - [Petition](#) of **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC** for Approval of the Sale and Transfer of Certain Assets, Facilities, Property, and CPCN for the Provision of Water Service in **Harrison County**.
 - [Petition](#) of **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC** for Approval of the Sale and Transfer of Certain Assets, Facilities, Property, and CPCN for the Provision of Water Service in **Harrison County**.
 - [Petition](#) of **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC** for Approval of the Sale and Transfer of Certain Assets, Facilities, Property, and CPCN for the Provision of Water Service in **Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties**.





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- [Petition](#) of **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC** for Approval of the Sale and Transfer of Certain Assets, Facilities, Property, and CPCN for the Provision of Water Service in **Harrison and Jackson Counties**.
- Hearing Examiner:
 - Petition of [Wildwood Solar, LLC](#), for a CPCN Authorizing the Construction, Ownership, and Operation of a Solar Electric Generating Facility in **Tallahatchie County**.
 - Petition of [Half Step Solar, LLC](#), for a CPCN Authorizing the Construction, Ownership, and Operation of a Solar Electric Generating Facility in **Tunica County**.
 - Petition of [Beaman Renewables LLC](#), for a CPCN Authorizing the Construction, Ownership, and Operation of a Solar Electric Generating Facility in **Lincoln County**.
 - Petition of [SR Magnolia LLC](#), for a CPCN Authorizing the Construction and Operation of a Solar Electric Generating Facility in **Monroe County**.
 - Petition of [SR West Marshall LLC](#), for a CPCN Authorizing the Construction and Operation of a Solar Electric Generating Facility in **Marshall County**.
 - Petition of [SR Mount Pleasant LLC](#), for a CPCN Authorizing the Construction and Operation of a Solar Electric Generating Facility in **Marshall County**.
 - [Petition](#) of **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC** for Approval of the Sale and Transfer of Certain Assets, Facilities, Property, and CPCN for the Provision of Water Service in **Harrison, Hinds, and Rankin Counties**.
 - [Petition](#) of **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC** for Approval of the Sale and Transfer of Certain Assets, Facilities, Property, and CPCN for the Provision of Water Service in **Lamar and Lauderdale Counties**.
 - [Formal Complaint](#) Against **South Central Water Association** for Failure to Provide Reasonably Adequate Water Service on Holiday Road in **Hinds County**.



We conducted our routine pre-docket meeting the afternoon ahead of September's monthly docket meeting.



If you were unable to attend the Open Docket Meeting and missed the live stream, a recording of the meeting can be found [here](#).

Last Week at the MPSC

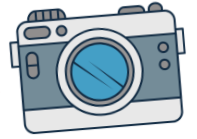
- 📁 **Entergy Mississippi, LLC (EML)**, filed [Notice](#) of its Franklin-Ray Braswell 500 kV Upgrade Project for the Franklin Substation in **Franklin County**. The upgrade will facilitate the interconnection of seven customers to EML's transmission system pursuant to a Multi-Party Facilities Construction Agreement between the interconnection customers, EML, and the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc.
- 📁 **The Commission** issued a [Scheduling Order](#) in regard to the Petition by **Entergy Mississippi, LLC** for a CPCN to Continue to Make Improvements to and Modernize Its Transmission and Distribution Infrastructure in **Grenada County**.



CENTRAL DISTRICT

*GRIP N GRIN event at Mama Hamils Southern
Cooking & BBQ, Inc*

SNAPS



Missouri Attorney General, Andrew Bailey, was in the house!

2023 Annual Meeting of the Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi



More Snaps from Madison County Community Forum



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Click flyers to enlarge

Mark your calendars Central District!

These forums will give you the opportunity to learn more about the Commission and its responsibilities. We look forward to discussing ideas and receiving feedback from those who can attend. We hope to see you there!



Upcoming Locations:

Vicksburg	Greenville	Jackson	Meridian	Port Gibson
Sept. 19	Sept. 26	Oct. 3	Oct. 10	Oct. 17

How far will current funding get Mississippi in the broadband build out?

WLBT by Courtney Ann Jackson • Published on Sept. 11, 2023

CLICK HERE

Mississippi gets \$12 million in federal funds to fortify power grid

MPB • by Lacey Alexander • Published on Sept. 12, 2023

CLICK HERE

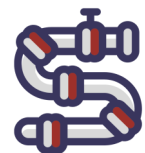


Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of 32 complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	24
Telecommunications	6
Water/Sewer	2

Our Pipeline Safety Division completed 2 construction inspections in the Central District during the month of August.

The total amount of construction notices that were received by the Commission in the Central District during the month of August is approximately \$2.18 million.



“Reporting of Construction Work”- The rule is found in Chapter 57.1: All Construction work involving gas facilities in which the estimated cost of proposed facilities is in excess of eight thousand dollars are related facilities that would be governed by the Federal Minimum Safety Requirements, will be reported in writing, or via telephone to the MS Public Service Commission prior to starting date of such construction. (There are exceptions for emergencies.)

The Commission encourages all intra-state natural gas operators to comply with the rule.